

**St. Ambrose Catholic School
School Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 10, 2024
6:00pm – Community Center**

MINUTES

Members Present: Stephanie King, Erin Kochan, Justin Lacy, Stephanie Monroe, Ashley Lack, Mary Terry, Abby Stephens, Maggie Kohl, Paul Braundmeier

Others Present: Bob Baird, Deacon Jay Wackerly, Father Steven Janoski, Jules King

Call to Order: Chairperson Erin Kochan opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Opening Prayer: Opening Prayer was led by Father Steven Janoski.

Committee and other reports submitted are included after the board minutes. The following notes are from discussion during our meeting about those reports.

Approval of November Minutes: A motion to approve the Minutes from the November meeting as previously distributed was made by Mark Terry and seconded by Maggie Kohl. The motion was carried with unanimous approval.

Standing Committee Updates:

- Executive Committee (Erin Kochan, Abby Stephens, Ashley Lack): No report.
- Policy/Planning (Justin Lacy/Abby Stephens): Middle School Service Hours Update: Prior to the meeting, Justin Lacy submitted a first draft of the policy to Board members. A discussion was held regarding the details of the policy, with several Board members suggesting a reduction in the number of required hours, especially when introducing the concept of service hours to the younger grades. It was suggested to allow younger students to be able to volunteer in other ways, instead of requiring it to be with a non-profit organization. Specifically it was suggested to allow younger students to volunteer to help a grandparent, etc. A discussion was also held regarding service hour requirements for Applefest for students. Paul Braundmeier had data from the 2023 Applefest, noting that there were 56 open spots (21%) for volunteers on opening night. Father Steve noted that he met with the Alton Deanery and other schools are having difficulty getting parent volunteers for events as well. He stated that the goal is for the schools to have similar policies, especially with St. Mary's-Alton and St. Ambrose, so that our schools are in collaboration and not competition. St. Mary's is considering raising the buyout price for their service hours. The Deanery is also looking at having tuition rate consistency for St. Ambrose and St. Mary's. The Board was in agreement for electronic tracking of service hours and Bob Baird noted that Emily Kribs would likely

be certifying the student service hours since she currently tracks family service hours. The Board was also in agreement for rewards/recognition for students exceeding their service hour requirement. Father Steve suggested recognition at school as well as during Mass so the parishioners can see what our students are doing. More information will be coming after the next Alton Deanery meeting, which will help draft our policy in alignment with other schools.

- Development (Mark Terry): No report. See the SAPA report for details.
- Public Relations (Stephanie Monroe/Maggie Kohl): Bob Baird noted that he spoke with John Hentrich at Riverbender regarding the marketing video. A budget was submitted to SAPA for approval, as SAPA has agreed to fund this project. Once the final budget is approved, a team will be created to begin work. The goal is to have this video completed in time for the March 1st registration launch. A request has also been submitted to SAPA for signage to promote registration. Bob Baird and some 8th grade students will also be speaking to Mark Ellebracht at WBGZ on Tuesday, January 30 at 11:00 a.m. to talk about Catholic Schools Week.
- Building/Grounds (Paul Braundmeier): Nothing current with the school. The Building/Grounds Committee is looking at new roofing options for the church.
- Athletics (Bob Baird): See the athletics report submitted by Athletic Director Monica Ellebracht and Assistant AD Emily Kribs. Maggie Kohl asked about having a master calendar for all athletic schedules. Paul Braundmeier asked about the possibility of having a bowling team. Justin Lacy noted that at the recent 4th grade basketball tournament, other schools gave feedback that they were impressed with the St. Ambrose cheerleaders and their presence at the tournament.

Strategic Plan Update (Erin Kochan): The Strategic Plan Committee is hoping to finalize the 1st draft by the end of this week. They still need to add fall MAP scores to the report. Once completed, the draft will be sent to Father for 1st review, then sent to the Board.

IT Update (Deacon Jay Wackerly): See the IT report submitted by Eli Hawkins in December.

Principal's Update (Bob Baird): Catholic Schools Week is January 28-February 2. Information will be sent out in the next few days regarding activities planned for the week. Highlights include: Monday-Adoration/Eucharistic Procession; Tuesday-World Mission Rosary; Wednesday-Community Day with an all-school Mass and refreshments afterwards for students/parents/parishioners; Thursday/Friday-teacher appreciation and student activities including game rooms set up for students throughout the school. This week will also be the 4th-8th grade spelling bee with the winner advancing to the St. Louis regional. The Knights of Columbus free throw contest will also be held. There will also be a prep rally with volleyball games after with 8th graders vs parents and 8th graders vs staff. Maggie Kohl asked a question about additional individual student details from the MAP testing. Bob Baird noted that teachers have access to a portal with more detailed information, but it is not in a sharable/printable

format. The family report, which was previously distributed, is the only sharable report. It was suggested to schedule a meeting with the child's teacher if additional information is needed or especially if there is an area of concern. Bob Baird noted that PreK aid Rachel Kirchner resigned; the position has already been filled by Emily Slayback with an anticipated start date of 1/16/24. He also noted that the Alton Godfrey Rotary Club made a donation to all Alton/Godfrey kindergarten classes, including St. Ambrose, for games/hands on activities for beginner readers. He also discussed upcoming 6th/7th grade class trips, scheduled for March 27th. The 6th grade will be going to the Challenger Learning Center in St. Louis and the 7th grade will be going to Springfield for activities including touring the new Capital building and the military museum. Due to these field trips, the Living Stations will be moved to Tuesday March 26th.

Parent Exit Survey (Deacon Jay Wackerly): The survey was updated by Father Steve and Deacon Jay. It will be developed into a Google Doc, with the survey results going to the Executive Committee and Father Steve only. Deacon Jay will send out the survey questions to the Board for review.

Additional Discussion: Stephanie King noted that she has been in contact with the Arch-diocesan Reclamation Center for a statue for the school. The center has been closed for repairs and is supposed to reopen this month. It may require a letter from Father Steve to request a specific item. The alternative option is for a 4 feet tall statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus that has been offered to be donated. It would need to be repainted. Father Steve noted that Matt Darr could be asked to repaint the statue if needed. Paul Braundmeier gave a review of safety information regarding natural gas.

Closing Prayer: Closing prayer was led by Father Steven Janoski.

Adjournment: At 6:48 pm Mark Terry motioned to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Paul Braundmeier.

The next meeting is February 14, 2024.

REPORTS

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT- Bob Baird

- Jan. 12 - 2nd Quarter Report Cards Open
- Jan. 15 - NO SCHOOL, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Jan. 17 - 1:30 Dismissal
- Jan. 31- Catholic Schools Week
- Feb. 2

- **English-Language Arts Curriculum Adoption Committee** - In the upcoming weeks, we will convene a committee to adopt a new ELA curriculum for next school year and beyond. Kim Wackerly is going to lead this committee and we welcome School Board involvement.
- **State & Diocesan Accreditation Scheduled** - Our State and Diocesan Accreditation visit is scheduled for Monday March 25, 2024.
- **Tuition Restructuring Coming for 2024-2025** - For the 2024-2025 school year and beyond, Catholic parishes and elementary schools in the Diocese of Springfield and the Alton Deanery will be restructuring tuition to be more consistent. Schools will charge a base tuition that is the same for all. Students and families will be awarded “scholarships” for meeting the expectations of Mass participation and attendance, thus reducing their overall tuition expense. This approach has been used at St. Ambrose for years, but terminology and the specific structure will have some changes. More details will be shared in the upcoming weeks.
- **7th Grade To Attend STEAM fair at LCCC** - On Friday Apr. 12, 2024 our 7th grade class will have the opportunity to attend the first annual STEAM fair at Lewis and Clark Community College. The students will be able to experience different STEAM related programs at LCCC that will expose them to future degree and career opportunities.
- **Final Single Doors Replaced** - During the Christmas break, the last of our single doors were replaced. Through generous donors we have been able to replace all the exterior individual doors in the last 3 years!
- **Cash Bash Tickets on Sale Now** - The Cash Bash ticket sales are live and on sale now! New this year, in place of the SCRIP program, each family is required to purchase/sell two tickets. There will be a place to denote the family who should receive the credit, so please make sure if someone else is purchasing for your family they put your name on the sale to ensure you get credit.

The drawing will take place on February 10, 2024. There will be two early bird drawings held on January 15th and on January 29th, so get your purchases in early!

HOW IT WORKS | All 500 tickets are placed in a tumbler and EVERY ticket is drawn out. Every 10th ticket drawn wins a cash prize of either \$100, \$250, or \$500! Every non-winning ticket gets put in to one FINAL BONUS ROUND for \$500

To purchase:

Online: <http://sacashbash24.givesmart.com/>

Text: SACASHbash24 to 76278 for a link to your phone

In person: At the Parish Office

- **Faith Families Return to St. Ambrose** - Recently returning to St. Ambrose were “faith families.” Each “faith family” has 1-2 randomly selected students from each grade level. The faith families will meet several times throughout the year. The purpose of these families is to have students of

different ages interact together in activities that are geared to help the students grow spiritually, to strengthen our school community, and to provide opportunities for learning.

FATHER STEVE’S REPORT

SCHOOL BOARD

November 8, 2023

16 of our children (13 from St. Ambrose School and 3 from the Parish School of Religion) were confirmed and received their first Communion on Saturday, November 4, 2023.

Parent Meeting for children preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation was Tuesday, November 7 in the Church.

Date for Confirmation and First Eucharist for current second graders: Saturday, **October 19, 2024** at 11:00 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield

Several children who have attained “catechetical” age (7) will be prepared for the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) to be celebrated at the Easter Vigil on Saturday, March 30, 2024 at 8:00 p.m.

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Sunday Mass is an expectation for our Catholic families to retain/receive the “active” parishioner tuition rate. Exceptions must be approved by Fr. Steve. We have been following this practice for five years now and the Catholic Churches/Schools in Springfield have adopted it.

ATHLETICS REPORT

ATHLETICS REPORT - Bob Baird (from Athletic Director Monica Ellebracht and Assistant AD Emily Kribs)

Once again we had a good golf season. We are very thankful that Scott Rose volunteered to coach our golf team. A total of 14 students participated in golf.

Basketball is in full swing. We have 52 students participating in basketball this school year. We have the following teams this year:

3rd/4th grade boys coached by Tom Schmidt and Justin Johnson

4th/5th grade girls coached by Erin & Tom Kochan assisted by David Dornes

5th grade boys coached by Pat King, Steve Noss, & Dan Cruz

6 grade girls coached by Ryan Jacobs & Brad Jacobs

6th/7th grade boys coached by Joe Monroe & Phil Robinson

8th grade boys coached by Nic Stotler & David Dornes

We compete against St. Mary's Alton, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Evangelical, Maryville Christian, St. Boniface, St. Mary's Edwardsville, SSPP Collinsville, St. Paul Highland, St. John Neumann, St. Elizabeth & Holy Family

St. Ambrose continues to host 6th grade games on the weekend. A few teams will have the opportunity to participate in some tournaments.

Volleyball & Track sign ups will begin in the next couple of weeks.

SAPA REPORT

St. Ambrose Parents' Association
SAPA Meeting: January 3, 2024
Location: St. Ambrose Community Center

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 5:58 p.m. by Natalie Gordon, Interim President.

OPENING PRAYER: Jesus, our friend and our brother, please guide us with your wisdom and love today. Help us to do your will and to be open to hear your voice as we speak and listen to one another. Amen.

PRESIDENT REPORT- Natalie Gordon, *Interim President*

- No report.

SECRETARY REPORT- Ashley Lack

- Approval of Minutes from December 6, 2023 meeting
 - A motion was made by Natalie Gordon and seconded by Susan Kasten to approve the Minutes as distributed.

TREASURER REPORT- Susan Kasten

- Checking account balance \$37,085
 - December income \$1355
 - This includes spiritwear, some of the cardinal's calendars, toy drive donations, and a \$500 donation from the Kohl family
 - Thank you Kohl family for your generous donation!
 - December expenses \$1587
 - This includes football raffle payout, spiritwear payout, Cash Bash banners, digital billboards to market Cash Bash, teacher appreciation, Family Movie Night, and the oranges given to students for St. Nick's Day.

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT- Natalie Gordon reporting for Emily Lacy & Natalie Gordon

- Arrow signs- contract signed. 2 billboard locations runs from January 9th- February 9th
 - The billboards actually went live today 1/3/24; we are not being charged for the extra 6 days. Thank you to Arrow Signs!
- Banners picked up from Schwartzkopf's- received the okay to place banner at Landmarks and Ridge location.
 - A banner will also be placed at Stamper Ln/Godfrey Rd.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES REPORT- Sarah Mendoza

- Completed Events
 - Family Movie Night - THANK YOU to Chris Varady and Mark Terry. Thank you to all who came out and participated - it was a fun, family event
 - Recommend holding the event in the Community Center instead of the gym next time due to emergency lighting affecting seeing the screen
 - Christmas Feast - a huge thank you to Maggie Monahan and team for a successful celebration

- Upcoming Events
 - Ice Skating at the Loading Dock- Chris Varady, Chair
 - Saturday, January 27, 2024
 - Reserved from 9:00-11:30 a.m.
 - Planning to have snacks of donuts and milk/water/orange juice
 - SAPA is paying \$500 for this event, which includes skates and rental for unlimited skaters
 - No cost to families but will have donation bucket or Venmo QR code available to anyone who would like to help offset the cost
 - More details and links to come
 - Mother / Son Dance
 - Planning for February
 - More information to come
 - Tentative date of February 24
 - Needs approved by Father before official
 - 6:00-8:00 pm in the gym
 - Theme: Glow Crazy
 - Family Bowling - Sue Stirnaman, Chair
 - Tentative date April 14
 - Needs approved by Father before official
 - 1:00-2:30 pm at Bowl Haven
 - Sue was given information on 2 packages available-
 - 1.5 hours bowling, shoe rental, and 2 pitchers soda for every 5 bowlers cost \$11.05 per bowler
 - 1.5 hours bowling, shoe rental, 2 pitchers of soda for every 5 bowlers and 1 large single topping pizza for every 5 bowlers cost \$14.95 per bowler
 - We would like to have it set up like last year, where lanes were reserved for St. Ambrose and families paid for their individual shoe rental/2 games. Food was not provided, but families were welcome to purchase food on their own. Sue will contact Bowl Haven again for clarification on this event.
 - More information to come.

DEACON JAY'S REPORT- Natlie Gordon reporting for Jay Wackerly

- The Stewardship report should be available on the St. Ambrose web site at the end of the week.
- We plan to start developing our local instance of ParishStaq, the new Church Management System (CMS) , in January. Our tentative goal is to have the new CMS by the 3rd quarter.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT- Natalie Gordon reporting for Bob Baird

Calendar

1/3/24	School Resumes
1/12/24	Report Cards Open
1/15/24	NO SCHOOL, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
1/17/24	1:30 Dismissal
128/24	Catholic Schools Week
-2/2/24	

2nd Semester Happenings - The 2nd Semester of this 2023-2024 school year is full of many important tasks that must be completed. Two of the most important tasks are;

-English/Language Arts Curriculum Review - A committee of teachers and parents will decide on a new ELA curriculum for the entire school.

-State & Diocesan Accreditation - On Monday March 25, representatives from the State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Diocese of Springfield will be on hand to review our policies, processes, and how we operate as a school. At the end of the process we are to receive recognition and accreditation from the State and Diocese.

Final Single Doors Replaced - During the Christmas break, the last of our single exterior doors were replaced. In the last 3 ½ years we have replaced all the exterior doors, with the remaining glass entrances to be covered by the IEMA Grant.

Catholic Schools Week Coming Soon

Our annual celebration of our Catholic schools is scheduled for the end of January during the week of January 28-February 2, 2024. The list of activities is almost complete and will be announced in the upcoming days.

NEW BUSINESS

- Cash Bash Fundraiser
 - Tickets went live on January 1st. <https://SACASHbash24.givesmart.com>
 - 58 tickets sold so far as of tonight's meeting.
 - There are 162 school families. If each family sells their required 2 tickets, that would be 324 tickets sold with a net profit of \$17,000.
 - 154 tickets need to be sold to break even; all ticket sales above this is profit
 - Early bird drawings are January 15 and January 29
 - Purchase cut off to be included in early bird drawings:
 - Sunday January 14 at 6:00 pm
 - Sunday January 28 at 6:00 pm

- Yard signs advertising Cash Bash were available at the meeting and distributed to those who had connections to businesses or whose homes are in high traffic areas.
- PR team will ask Father about changing the marquee in front of church to advertise Cash Bash

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION- Open Forum

- Our PR team has not heard anything further about the marketing video that was going to be made with Riverbender. They will follow up with Mr. Baird on this.

CLOSING PRAYER: We give you thanks, Lord, for helping us to learn more and how to love one another. Please help us to always be instruments of your perfect peace in our school. Amen.

With no additional questions/discussions, the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m. by Natalie Gordon, Interim President.

St. Ambrose Tech Department Monthly Report

Submitted by Eli Hawkins

Reporting Period

Start Date: 11-07-2023

End Date: 12-11-2023

Ticketing Metrics:

Tickets submitted: 15

Tickets resolved: 20

Tickets unresolved (all-time): 20

Tasks accomplished:

Installed and configured new cameras in middle school classrooms

Completed MAP testing for all students with no significant tech issues

Researched and compared new hosting options for the school website

Updated all network switches and routers in the school

Updated primary firewall with necessary security and firmware updates

Added wifi access points to the principal's office and parish office

Tested and adjusted security cameras for better license plate capture

Inventoried all retired Chromebooks, sorting for ownership status

Short term projects (to complete by the end of the school year):

Create a full asset inventory for tracking and budgeting (Has been started)

Clean and reorganize the IT office and basement storage areas (Has been started)

Establish practices for maintaining compliance with all laws and regulations

Create KPIs for measuring progress in our department

Reorganize the network structure, and increase security site-wide (Has been started)

Install phones in all classrooms

Install door access controls

Establish maintenance calendars for equipment and software

Create and implement staff training

Over the Christmas break, I will be working on resolving lingering issues with the network configuration. This will require quite a bit of investigation and testing, and must be done while no one is in the school as the network will be down for maintenance. Network issues have taken up much of my time over the last month, and I am hoping that this work will address several issues as well as increase our ability to make corrections and changes moving forward.

Submitted by Ashley Lack, Secretary